

Contributed

OUR BRIGHTSIDE LETTER.

The Church in West Virginia.

Of course we mean "Our Church." It is the Church to us. But we are thankful that it is not all that there is of the Church of God in this Mountain State. With us, not only in location and in progress and service, but in "like precious faith" are our brethren, Methodist, Baptists, Episcopalians, Lutherans, striving together for the faith of the goeps. We are not rivals but brethren and co-laborers, and we pray for their growth and fruitfulness. Just what their strength and progress are we have not now the means of knowing, but we hear of their good work for Christ in every section. We wish them prosperity, for the field is large and the need is great.

Presbyterians, mainly, were the hardy pioneers; the Scotch-Irish who came over the Alleghenies from the Potomac and Shenandoah valleys. The South branch and the Greenbrier gave them homes and great forests and rich lands, and many log cabins, remote and unfurnished, had the Bibles and catechisms brought from Ulster and the Scottish Highlands. In 1760, the first white families came to the Greenbrier valley. In 1783, the Rev. John McCue had three churches and many other preaching places in the country now embraced by Greenbrier, Monroe and Pocahontas counties. And in 1794 the church of Lewisburg, the Old Stone church, was built—115 years ago. The General Assembly will meet within its walls in May, 1910. The Synod of Virginia was with some difficulty persuaded to come there in 1843, and it came in good numbers on horseback and in vehicles of many kinds. It came again in 1857, and thirty-nine years later in 1896 for the population in the Western valleys grew rapidly, and the churches grew in number and in numbers and in zeal to overtake the destitutions.

A great mission field the West Virginia State has been to the Synod of Virginia. And the responsibility for extension and labor here has been the chief reason for the Synod's remaining undivided. Two Presbyteries are wholly in the new state, the older, Greenbrier, now having forty churches and 23 ministers, nearly all of them in the active ministry; and the younger, Kanawha, with 23 churches and 14 ministers. But the old valley Presbyteries, lengthen their cords far out toward the Ohio, and have planted their stakes in almost every valley, for Winchester has forty-one churches in West Virginia, some strong and full of fruit, and some the beginning of life and promise. And Lexington has 25, in railroad centers, mining towns and lumber camps. Montgomery has three and Abingdon crosses State lines, to support one or two. So the old Synod has 133 churches in the mountain State and 60 of its ministers, heralds of the Cross, with the blue banner. They have a great field, with a population, growing, mixed, scat-

tered, destitute and difficult. May the Lord bless them richly, and His people sustain them generously.

In the valley of the Kanawha, there are strong churches at Lewisburg, Mount Pleasant, Ronceverte, Hinton, Anderson, Montgomery, Charleston, St. Albans, Huntington and Point Pleasant, a chain of strong links, churches blessed with an able and faithful ministry, filled each Sabbath with large assemblies, intelligent, devout, growing and giving. Fine buildings there are too, with substantial and imposing architecture in stone, as at Charleston and Huntington, and new churches in stone rising at St. Albans, and Bream Memorial in West Charleston. If a Presbyterian would be cheered by seeing numbers crowding the sanctuary to overflowing, he should come to Bream Memorial, and find no seat and often no standing room, five or six hundred in the great Sunday school, a hundred and more boys marching with the flag of the covenant fathers.

Then is not Lexington Presbytery planted firmly at Elkins, with a beautiful church and a strong membership, and an active and beloved pastor, and a college too, with its superb view on the mountains, and on the future as well? Winchester reaches out from the Eastern Panhandle from Charleston and Martinsburg and Shepherdstown, with their older churches, bearing fruit down to old age, far up the Potomac and its branches to the Fairfax stone and beyond, with strong posts at Romney and Moorefield, and has planted its standard at Keyser and Piedmont and Davis and Petersburg and many other places.

At Charleston, the fine capital of the new Virginia, on the Kanawha, Dr. Henry Ruffner organized the church in 1819. And to a growing congregation, Dr. James M. Brown ministered from 1837 to 1862. You may find the home and the room in which he wrote the thrilling story of his mother, Mary Moore, "The Captive of Abb's Valley." In 1868, Dr. John Calvin Barr came to this church from Lewisburg, to be a strong tower in this community and the whole valley for religion and morals and all things good and lovely. At eighty-five, he survives, greatly venerated and loved by all, and rejoicing in the good and effective work of his successor, Dr. Ernest Thompson.

J. P. S.

THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

Bunyan's work was among the first western books to be given to the Chinese. In the kindness of God it found an excellent translator, a man who made those symbolical names stand out with great vividness.

Could Bunyan see what a splendid work his book is doing, he would thank his Master with tears for those 12 years in jail. Only yesterday an old teacher, a non-communicant as yet, said: "I have not read the New Testament through, but I have read Pilgrim's Progress through many times. I didn't used to believe Christ died for men, but I do now."

It is safe to say that in this part of China, no living man is exercising a

deeper, wider influence in forming the Christian character of the individual Christians than John Bunyan. Everyone of our Christians that can read, has read his work. One of our elders said: "I did not know Christianity, though I was a professor, till I read Pilgrim's Progress." One of our old Christian women said: "I read Pilgrim's Progress with much profit and I have been reading and crying over Christiana all day today." Today I have frequently caught myself listening to the helper as he sits in the court with his class of catechumens around him, while he illustrates and amplifies Christian's journey.

Would that parents and pastors at home would more constantly urge young Christians to read carefully this book. It will not only interest, but will bring rich knowledge and experience to every one, who will read it and try to see his journey portrayed in its quaint pages.

B. C. Patterson,

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Suchien, China.

THE AMERICAN REVISION WRONG

On Titus 2: 13; 2 Peter 1: 1.

By Rev. Luther Link.

It is very much to be regretted that the American Revised Version has gone back to the old translation of these passages, for the Revised Version, as fixed by the English committee, takes "God" and "Savior" as embraced together under one article; "our" being an attributive to both. It renders the verse: "Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ." Now that the American Revisers have changed this back to the old translation, we have the two revised versions opposed to each other on these texts, and every man will have to decide for himself which is right. It seems hardly credible that so great an uncertainty should inhere in the text itself; and is it possible that the world of today is not sufficiently conversant with the laws of the Greek language to decide this question? It would seem so; and it is unfortunate that some difficulty hangs around several of the passages which directly assert the deity of Christ.

Dr. Warfield, in a footnote in his "Lord of Glory" (p. 245), quotes a German editor of Winer's grammar in favor of understanding these passages and several related passages as having reference to a single person, in which therefore Christ is called God. He says: "In any case no one will ground here on grammar, but must hold a careless construction possible, and therefore in deciding the question leave room for material considerations." He says "Winer had on Biblico-theological grounds decided in these passages for two persons—that is, he decided on the strength of his conception of what these authors would be likely to say, but he allows that grammatically they are flexible to the other opinion." This remark of Schmiedel's on Winer is evidently just, for here is what he really says, according to Lunemann's seventh edition: "For reasons which lie in the doctrinal system of Paul, I do not regard 'Soterios' (Savior, in Tit. 2: 13) as a